

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment claim 1 is amended for better grammatical flow and claims 8-22 are added. No new matter is added.

Support for new claims 8-22 is found throughout the specification, drawing figures, and the original claims.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. Reply to Rejection

On page 2, item 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,761,049 to Nitschmann et al. (hereinafter "Nitschmann"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,860,300 to Valent (hereinafter "Valent"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 recites for a laundry dryer having an entrance sealing assembly for a hinged door, the laundry dryer comprising a frame cover having a frame cover panel, a front support, coupled with the frame cover, for supporting a drum, the front support having an inner end surface; and a unified sealing member having first and second ends, disposed between the frame cover and the front support, the second end of the unified sealing member contacting the door glass when the hinged door is closed.

Nitschmann discloses a door 1, a glass door 2, which is fixed in a door frame 3, and a sealing sleeve 10 for sealing joints in household appliances. Nitschmann's sealing sleeve 10 includes an outer beading 9 having two sealing lips 4,5 and at least one groove 13 formed in the

outer beading 9. The sealing sleeve 10 is clamped to the edge 7 of the housing 6 by a clamping element 11, which is shown as an annular helical spring that acts on a sheet metal collar 8 attached to edge 7 of the housing 6. The outer beading 9 contains an annular channel 12 to accommodate the annular helical spring 11. (Figures 1 and 2, column 3, line 56-column 4, line 9). In Figure 3 of Nitschmann, the outer beading 9 further includes an annular lip 16, and a second groove 14. Nitschmann does not disclose a front support.

Valent discloses a clothes washing machine having a specific bellows structure arranged between the opening 5 of a door 4 and an associated opening 8 provided on an inner washing tub 10. The bellows minimize the transmission of the vibrations generated by the inner washing tub 10 to the outer cabinet of the machine when the machine is operated (abstract). Valent's flexible bellows 12 is attached at one end to the front surface 1 by a helical attachment to an edge 6 of the front surface 1 in similar manner as the attachment in Nitschmann. The other end of Valent's flexible bellows 12 is attached to an edge 7 of the tub 10 by a helical spring in the same manner as the attachment in Nitschmann (Figure 4, column 2, line 62-column 3, line 10). Valent discloses that a tub 10 contains a perforated drum 11 (column 2, line 57-58), but does not disclose that the tub 10 is coupled with a front surface 1.

The Office Action asserts that Valent teaches a washing machine sealing device 12 coupled between a door frame 1 and a "drum support" 10 and asserts that since Nitschmann teaches his sealing device being used in a conventional washing machine and Valent teaches that

it is conventional to couple a door and a support for a drum with a sealing device, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to couple the door and the seal of Nitschmann with the drum support of Valent. Applicant respectfully disagrees as the assertion is without support in the references.

The means for clamping the sealing sleeve 10 to the edge region 7 of the housing 6 in Nitschmann is the same as the means for clamping the front end of the flexible bellows 12 to the edge 6 of the front surface 1 and the back end of the flexible bellows 12 to the edge 7 of the tub 10 in Valent. Basically, a helical spring clamps the end of the sealing sleeve 10 in Nitschmann as well as the two ends of the flexible bellows 12 to hooked edges in Valent. Therefore, the combined teaching of Nitschmann and Valent does not show more than what is shown in Valent.

Further, in Valent, there is no disclosure of a front support, which is coupled with the frame cover for supporting a drum. The asserted drum support is actually a tub 10 disclosed to contain a perforated drum 11. There is complete silence as to whether the tub 10 is coupled to a front surface 1 (column 2, lines 47-61).

Furthermore, neither Nitschmann nor Valent suggest the front support because they are directed to washing machines having an inner drum and an outer tub. The sealing sleeve of Nitschmann and the flexible duct of Valent have no application for a laundry dryer. The described sleeve and duct are necessary elements for preventing the transmission of vibration to

the frame of the washing machines such as those disclosed in Nitschmann and Valent. The presence of the sleeve and duct is necessitated by the high speed rotations performed by the perforated drum of the washing machines that results in much higher levels of vibration, which is exacerbated by the weight of the water contained in the tub and felt by the rotating drum.

In contrast, a laundry dryer's drum rotates at a slower speed and without the added weight of the water. Therefore, the direct coupling of the drum to a front support that is combined to the frame or frame cover causes no undue vibrations to be transmitted externally. In a washing machine, however, the front of the drum must be supported by means that may include heavy dampers because of the higher levels of vibrations encountered. These fundamental differences between laundry dryers and washing machines starkly reveal that Nitschmann and Valent does not disclose or suggest a front cover, which is coupled to the frame cover for supporting a drum.

For the reasons discussed above, none of Nitschmann, Valent, or their combination discloses all of the features of claim 1 and the recited combination of features. Claim 1 is therefore patentable over the applied references and their combination. Claims 2-7, which depend from 1, are likewise patentable over the applied references and their combination for at least the reasons discussed above and for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Serial No. 10/724,355
Amendment dated DECEMBER 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 27, 2004

Docket No. K-0587

II. Claims

New claims 8-22 also are allowable over the applied references for similar reasons discussed above. Due consideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, Seth S. Kim, at the telephone number listed below.

Serial No. 10/724,355
Amendment dated DECEMBER 21, 2004
Reply to Office Action of September 27, 2004

Docket No. K-0587

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP



Carol L. Druzbeck
Registration No. 40,287
Seth S. Kim
Registration No. 54,577

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
(703) 766-3701 DYK/CLD/SSK:knv
Date: DECEMBER 21, 2004

Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610

\\fk4\Documents\2016\2016-702\46545.doc